

An Unfinished World
{A Masnavi Novel}

by
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INFINITE VARIETY

Infinite variety in finite form.
All Creation is a multitude.

We are all but worlds reflected
within the worlds we make.

No man is the same, even from
moment to moment's passing.

Were all the multitudes to die but one
lone soul all complexity would remain.

One or all the souls of Creation
made manifest, there is no change.

THE SERPENT KINGS

The Serpent Kings of Zyrn were proud
though they could not walk to Azunitan

but only crawl. The lady of Dularia had her
servants invisibly tend her as spider-fine

tapestries of dust and wind, and though
she could not see them yet never did they fail her.

Upon the rock spires of Jiniz many make their
nests and amid the stars they humbly tread

as sand burns bright below.

IN ZENIX

"In Zenix where the jungles bleed their
secrets the mantids curl in worship."

*"In Zenix even the slenderness of the thorn
thickens the poison of its hate."*

"Here where the jungles clothe the
shadows' flesh shall my Master be hidden?"

*"He is hidden even where we stand
openly before him."*

IN GOGARITH

In Gogarith men their shapes uncoil
to that of beasts, rendered nobler in that state.

Gone are the cities of Athalanica, gone are the
bones of heroes, but who does not forget?

Along the road into the sea to Eti-Caledel
the road laps up the blood.

How noble is the city
that the stones thirst after us?

THE BLACK LOTUS GARDENS

In the black lotus gardens of M'tar the dreamers
of Myr forget even their dreams.

In the crimson forests of Remaliah the serpent priests
bow before the blood-tinged leaves, then onward move
where depravities of light onward lead.

Amid fire seas and continents of black stone at Voienar
the wasp kings were cruel, neath a witch black moon even
the days were crucified at Voienar.

At Taudlavran the rain lords send their broken treasures
to make hungry the desert for a little rain.

Ledhia the Elder World, this the first step was made,
from here all things descend, all things begin.

Of Ledhia the Elder World, firstborn and
first beginning, what can I say?

WHERE THE AINYR

Where the Ainyr wheel forever in the azure skies of Myr
there begins the fire which fires the dark unbirth of sin.

One who stirred the waters of an ancient crimson sea as
bone-winged Ainyr wheel forever like misshapen angels as of old.

The Prophetess at Ayjix clasps all our futures like the unborn
souls of grain and silences all with her undying prophetic scream.

The Ages have drunk up our wisdom
and are blind.

CHIACA SHALL IN UZAL

Chiaca shall in Uzal sit as the sun throws back her
ambered spear and the moon his shield of jade.

In the Midran void our dreams are born and ascend
to us the gift of their absences.

The fox princess on lapping seas of silk waits mid
the Midran void for my words her lips to reach

as I lay my head on her lap and she strokes
my hair now turned stark grey and white.

THE KNIGHTS OF RHOM

The knights of Rhom and Remlor bear even
their burdens willingly, for they are

the knights of Rhom and Remlor and this their burden
is which they take up so willingly.

Lanin and his sorceries clothe the wizard in his secrets
and of all secrets, the greatest is the mystery in the man.

Charylion shall astride the moon and break the bow
of heaven till the thorn's black tears and the rose's flesh

clothe Charylion again
in seasons black with longing.

THE GRASSES OF JIADIC

The grasses of Jiadic flow though there is no wind.
The grasses of Jiadic obey no certain thing.

The wasp-turned seas of Knaisph drive the isles
from pole to pole, from dawn to dusk,

the wasp turned seas of Knaisph
obey no certain thing.

IN GALGAN

In Galgan are blue mountains, on the plains
are living cities, cities of living stone.

Each drop of the ocean's depth is blood
of the living world.

The fishers cast their nets
and the ocean gives up her wealth.

On Galgan are lung cities where the multitudes
have their nests. All is rendered symmetry,
the world and all within.

IN DHALTHREN

In Dhalthren when the Harvestmen go out
the dark fields are plowed, the night is bled.

In Xalthan a blade in a woman's hand is
sharper than her lover's touch.

The tongues of the grasses thirst for the
feast of man or beast.

Grass my lover
can be as sharp as blood.

THE GEMS OF CEDHE UL-LUTHIS TALIS

The gems of Cedhe Ul-Luthis Talis loom
in my memories softly, sinuous as dreams.

The door is opened and the worlds but
gleam as the mirror's glass.

The eye is spent of seeing, the mind is
spent of the mind's eternal sight.

Anyrairyn looms before me.
Inmdlhyryn looms behind.

Creation leaves its legacy in fertile plains which
bloom a moment, while backward waits the wasteland,

the arctic shores of eternity. We each and all burn
our waiting seconds in sacrifice.

In my hand is the poet's stone of Utan Etalis,
dull as lead or copper, sharp as the grasses' tongues.

ON RICE PAPER

On rice paper Jue Pae with a few brief strokes
built mountains more fragile than clouds.

Peldas took up his father's legacy and Medusa
he hunted, but who can slay the dead?

Ralifa was a broken leaf cut
from a crooked branch.

Leracuo in women's country only found
himself after finding again how less he was

mid the multitudes of men.

ON THE SCALES OF AN UNKNOWN

On the scales of an unknown thought
I wind my way.

*Barefoot I walked into light, into beauty
I came and abhorrence followed. After*

beauty had left but light remained.

*The coastline of Jadiz Corija is littered
with the ruins of empire;*

*the tatterings of a flag burnt by the sea,
a crown long crucified by wind.*

Stripped of all things but this above all at

Valanos knowing you are safe I am content.

Death has no terror anymore.

*In her enchantment was I famishing for all
was as a fever dream*

*fading from me in pools of cool shadow neath
pagodas tattooed with their priest-signs.*

*Dhuzaali wrote line on line, praising those
he loved, even as the axe fell.*

On the blade's edge of a scythe I wait for the seducer
to lay the virgin's veils on barley fields scythe-shaved.

I depart, for friend to friend must follow as they must.

A CRAEXIN WITCH

A Craexin witch, her sinuous voice my guide, leads
me indelibly on to the moment's unknowable vow.

The Shadikyr through eons tread. Immortal they have but
to wait and Creation in its time will always before them bow.

Squat and low the buildings sat for that lone Vhyndrel
prince, squat and low the world was crouched before him
and unknowingly did he rule the world of men.

I am a poet even among poets, even at Izuljaseri, where
the voice made sacred is more common than the crooked
speech of lies.

I am in this moment that I am. I end
my words. My words though never end.

THE GHALIS SPIDER

The Ghalis spider weaves of its own accord a crown
of dust for her. My blade song is broken into anthem.

Along the rivers of the dead Mukairos' clay is added.
Along the water's hidden reaches, Mukairos finds his way.

The star Tibbares guides the doomed to each of their
defeats. Welgreis who tasted death sought another taste.

Scororku sought to know the end of things but
found all he desired lay in his beginnings.

The Cycyc once to all things ruled and once to all things
knew. Where now the centre of their age, where now
the edge of their dominion?

Darcila in her grief takes up the crown of dust
for she knows no better way. There are jewels
upon the water and she is blind.

AJLIAN

Ajlian and her triple lion army; how mighty, even
when they fall what a rumbling thunder!

Karsyra at the river Ral Bogea; amid the total waters
she makes her stand and downward is her body cast
to the ocean's shore.

To the wastes of Dazoume all shades are taken,
all shades are judged. To the place where all souls go
judgement waits for them.

Giba is an ungrateful servant. She wants for food,
she wants for rest. Gajib her lord has all these
things and gives no peace to she he rules and bends.

At Revirstand the frost warred against the flame, the sun
set the shadows to their flights and the trees were charred
by fire and shadow and war.

Kosalah by trees long soaked in flame has but
to bend her lips and speak his cursed name and
she is content of all she ever knew.

THE PARAGARAP BEAST

The Paragarap beast clawed the sun to ash
in desperation for a sliver of the night.

The poet Saido wrote nothing; such an enigma
this man I'll never know.

Ascalara the sphinx's daughter lived in the shadow
of her sacred mother and neath her mother's death

was Ascalara hidden, and freed.

The warriors of Elluraim plumed in blood's soft
savagery, who has dared forget them?

At Casalis my voice was stilled. Such wonder
in this place of wonders how can I describe?

THE OX RUT TO ORKMUYR

The ox rut to Orkmuyr and the pikes of execution
arrayed side by side, Rerorda watching everything
as everything passes by.

The star of Etigol has dimmed, the star Caligar tonight
has brightly blazed. Tomorrow their fortunes by no
man can be seen.

An island alone on the ocean; we all are islands, we all
live aloft a pit unseen which bends its nature through
our souls in pain.

Valdys at Orkmuyr, bent to the ox rut, a blade
his only lover as the kiss is scarlet sent.

BELOSA, BELOSA

Belosa, Belosa, the roses are dying, mid winter's
death the roses are rising, only to die again.

Kwahme, I'll take your sister to the fields we knew,
share with her our secrets shared.

At Etimyr, at the moors of Etimyr closely hold
your heart. Try not to cry out again.

Yadira has not forgotten me. She shall not forget me.
After the death of winter she will not forget

Kwahme, as you do not forget.

BENEATH SEAS OF CARTHREGRELL

Beneath seas of Carthregrell lie cities ruined save one
untainted, unmolested, where demons have no king.

Xhriaz in sky still looms, moon of fire an eye whose
rage is poured upon waters and can never tear away its

gaze from ocean mirror below, seeing nothing nor
can see. It but reflects those unseen sins of light.

Knalogue upon ocean stands, into sky his gaze is
cast, while upon skin of ocean he reclines, unsatisfied.

Ajad unto Knalogue takes his stand. Within flesh
of other man Ajad's echo but remains, beneath Ajad

oceans of Carthregrell roar and rage as surf
is cast against an unknown shore perpetually.

JADIRA

Jadira, my daughter, bone merchants have made you,
carved, and shaped you. I have as well. My bones
your bones now. My life is your life.

Zaloyru, my brother, flesh merchants have made you,
shaped, perfected you. I have with them. My flesh
your flesh now, my life your life now,
for my life is now gone.

Agiaryn, my son, blood merchants have saved you,
perfected, healed you, as I sought to heal you.
My blood your blood,
yet you hate me still. And
now that you have my blood you hate yourself too.

ELIGATHUS

Eligathus found the path to immortality;
die a little every day till the heart is stone.

Rumajl crucified his soul on the skin of a man; on he wanders
thru the world praying death one day may foreshadow his steps.

Aletis in her stupor drunkenly walks the world a bottle at a time,
slanting toward oblivion, her mouth the doorway of her sins.

Ialidi on his crucifixion walk learns how
best to die; live a little a little at a time.

NO SINGLE COLOUR

The Jhalid butterfly has no single colour but
blends herself to every hue, to so be hidden by.

In Dhalyem ugliness is cherished to a fault, all
given masks bleak and grim, to hide their beauty
sadly lacking still within.

In Daljiel, in Dhala'jialma the jungle creeps
tentatively as lovers do, about to plunge the knife
in their waiting lovers' wounds.

ESJANTIA

Esjantia could not stand the sound of her own voice
and so murdered others lest they hear her speak.

Zayheiris at the dragon pool of shadows and of night
could not hear the wind sing, could not hear her cries.

Anadaijan believed all we were were scattered pieces
of ourselves, men and women and more, never
to be recalled as whole again.

The Khaj'hadim, most famed of warriors bred, feared
no man nor empire, but their own shadows as they bled.

AT GYANBION

The archer Nisairo at Gyanbion had the strength to
shoot himself thru the heart and still march on to war.

Leuroda and Eutria, two sisters shared one heart, one
mind and when they turned to kill each other they
killed themselves as well.

The god Sebok, god of the crocodile snapped down his
jaws on the corpse-spine fish, and impaled himself.

Ganiard in the fire plunged his hand to prove
his worth to any who watched him as he burned.

At Mhalbia the soldiers lined themselves rank on rank
and walked to their destruction like all before them had.

THE PINES MADE WAR

At Kalidym the pines made war against the
grass, and at Khualidym the grass made war

against the shadows,
by burning all the land.

Yiayia neath the needle's eye what did she
not see or feel as the steel pierced her thigh?

The horses of Strathcona, milky white and
sable, the mares of Shathacona, they ride

as they are able against,
upon the ghost-white sky.

Walcharen at Esquimalt, who had won the
battle of Esquimalt at Walcharen knew not
that he was able?

Here I end my pen,
and take it up again.

IN FALIGIRA

In Faligira, slithering, waving fire-serpent
trees descend unto the madness of the
savage-blunted times.

Looking out my vacant window seeing the
old tree staring still at me, I can't yet retire,
or return.

At Alijeit the final battle failed, the mirror
smooth plains littered with the dead of
all our days.

You can't hold a thing together
after its appointed time.

The match head dolls are burning
of their longings in the night.

In Ajlijeit let not a single day be
spent in hunger of your wrath.

BLOOD EBBS

Blood ebbs from a dripping wound out of the
mountainside of Zabbarralja and all the people
say, is that the future cannot be denied.

In the perfumed city of Ai'Zamaibalus
even the beggars cannot be told apart from lords
by sight or smell, but by their hunger only.

The star Gazrejh's light by no one can be rightly
seen for it has died already, and only its hollow
echo gleams.

Hamib the merchant obsessed with shadows
attempted once to hoard darkness and not even
his gluttony could stop the spark of night.

The giant Thaliwog threw mountains into valleys
and slaughtered uncounted villages to regain the
land his people once had lost, and
of which he alone remained.

THE IDOL'S DAUGHTER

Jyiwan the idol's daughter couldn't
tell her mother from a pile of stones.

Jianna at Jian'cua found her steps
echoed on the stairs leading upward to
the mountain top.

Chiara, oh Chiara even the leaves upon the
trees still recall your name in shame.

Charaisja in addiction's fire and rain, what
did she not feel she did not deserve in her
black-mouthed pain?

Chiaraisja, not even the sparrows
will envy your blighted name.

STRENGTH (In strength enough we know
life's meaning, to suffer yet endure.)

Pelizyr was broken beneath the weight of his
own grace; his very victories broke him down.

Cedis hanged himself when Eonfol scorned the
boy for some small misstep, some minor
failing as he tended his lone pasture
in the mists upon the hills.

Nemelez was taken to the bone bazaar and
before he had left his mother's womb already

was he sold and left with them who knows how
to turn a boy to flesh, and from flesh to anything.

AT THE JULEWADI

At the Julewadi the thirsty came to drink where
even bitter waters are a blessing still for some.

Wretched Dwa-Morai left behind, limp and
crippled while all the world went on ahead
to face the storm.

Amikala unveiled her beauty to all and all
that was seen was her litany of scars.

Lirsatva sat in the temple and heard neither
priest nor prophet, waiting still
for the words of her god.

It was in Uthia where stone trees grew that
Lameti that great worm bit down on our
humanities and left us
but husks in a dead dry land.

Alulia my poor girl, even bitter waters
won't satisfy you anymore, as we march
toward the Julwadi, and the coming storm.

WHEN DRAHVINA'S DAYS

When Drahvina's days were young her life
was not, and yet she hoped some beauty would
cover all her time-worn scars, or ours.

The Isapodian is that rarest of design, a creature
without remedy against its own bleak kind.

Gielle, the lady Gielle in a maze of malachite
could only find her way out when first she
took to flight.

Tl'zakethi upon the sea of trees fell harshly
to the ground when the sky a blackened night
became to all around.

Gazing into her black malachite obsidian
mirror Thalyrana saw not herself, but only
her accumulated years.

IN THE POOLS

In the pools of Esqmuia the women drink not
water nor blood, but wine, reaped from any
poor creature they chance to find.

In Wlachria mountains gleam so darkly that night
never seems to leave, dawn but a moment passing by.

Sylideira where butterflies sting, where vines
glisten of human blood and should you run even
the ground will catch you by your feet.

In Caljathu human leeches in their pure semblance
of men feed more upon themselves than any others in
their company, who are all safe beside them.

THE POET LIBAU

The poet Libau, honoured above all flesh,
he who wrote and filled the books of man

what fate has he now, that
the grave has had its fill of him?

Ralosa who carved into the cliffs of Eindon
each feature that she wore, do the stones remember her?

T'lorsa hungered for death, she who left no mark
in word or stone, but mother I remember you

above all the world I knew.

ZAINA'S DAYS

Zaina's days were longer the shorter that
she lived until her final days were spent in
eternity, and then . . .

Atemlyeh found her words knotted wickedly
in her throat to find all her good deeds an
utter wickedness they were.

Zalna held aloft the blade but could not kill
the tyrant, and so she but died that day.

Qanaq and Qyanaq could not share a single
space of ground, and so the people buried them

together, in mockery of the
lives they'd led in shame.

THE ABBESS

Colwena the abbess threw her body to the
waves lest even her lover touch her
in some semblance of intimacy.

Hremgara and Hraigara, a lone world and
its lone moon, grey and cold and none
there to say it even was.

Meirysa the serpent girl cast her scales
along the ground in imitation of the man
bleeding his sins as scorn.

Rumairyia the priestess before her idol
of obsidian and so alone is allowed to
curse her god, which she often does.

Selymaigado, last of the final gods, what did
he not know at the cliffs of Berogu, that brought
him so much shame?

Ambakisye on his ships of gold and sand, what does
he not see, except gold pouring 'cross his hands?

ON THE CLIFFS

Mouslan on the cliffs of Ylgariz; does she remember
the ocean, does she dare her eyes meet the shore?

Dalzym, poor child, for her the storm is rendered comforter,
to her is but a harvest of miseries and she is content.

Shadow is the temple of Eibeil. Eibeil is worshipped
by shadows. Darkness is servant to darkness.

Janseith lives. All complexity lay but in the second word.

VELESCU

Velescu was the executioner of men. The only
man he couldn't kill took refuge in the mirror.

Galwynd of the shattered glass pierced his eyes
to flee the labyrinth of his form reflected back

to him on every side.

Ajahx fell upon the mirror of the world, crashed
thru the ocean's flesh and broke his bones; not all

mirrors shatter, he realized as he drowned.

GOLD THEY WERE AND SILVER-EYED

Gold they were and silver-eyed, the people
of Zaithra, as the scorpion children waited
and gnashed their teeth outside.

The walls of Inidariu protected the lands of
Zaithra, but the malachite walls were blunted

and none could repair the gates.

Towers of bone twist upward into the sky
and into the blackened space and still the
people of Zaithra notice not the stars.

Takaihra the manticore girl gave her riddles
to the stones and only the scorpion children
noticed and answered her in turn.

Cynaz remembered that but forgot again,
gained and lost the fragile memories of time
before the walls.

Green rose worlds and black rose worlds blunt
themselves to ash; still none notices the death
even of a rose.

The drakenwolde, the sun in their jaws, notice
not the slaughter they have caused, as all the

scorpion children are free
to find their world again.

When God is in his orchard of stars all is right
in this world of ours, or so some fool has said.

IN HIS SUMMER SPLENDOUR

Sorkyreish in his summer splendour murdered
himself upon the red where autumn once had been.

In the fabled ruins of Zaligranea do not look to the
statues there; they are filled with human sight.

Syaxiara in her summer sweat lusted after the
forests in their marching thunder, in their cooling

touch, while all the branches were
themselves always without rest.

In the fragrant-scented deserts of Xyazim a handful
of sand is worth a king's ransom to any who live
not in the deserts of Xyazim.

To the people of Xyazairen I can say only this;
in stony soil, a brilliant flower does not always bloom.

Out of Cycyspherphia even a moment's peace is a
blessing; the land is never quiet, it is always whispering
of ghosts.

THE PARIAH DOGS

The pariah dogs are coming after dusk and all
is left undone, the boys tattered like fragments
of parchment, in their lust.

Magdanus finally threw the girl away, to save her
from the fire as it drowned the poor fool's name.

Sarada at Troinan with all her army slain fired
one final arrow against her own general; it was the
kindest compliment she could name.

Kahredryn-Onna on the street corner begged for
a small fat blade, and when given to him he sliced
his own throat; thus was his own life paid.

Xyuptus and Xyguptus are two species of fly
which feast on corpse-flesh. Few can spot the
differences between them; fewer try.

BRUSHED

Fa-Cao brushed a mountain on the page,
and followed it with another and another

until his home and all the world was
covered in the world that he had made.

*Urulari into battle rode, passed a sea of arrows
rising jagged from the ground to see his brothers'*

bodies torn and naked all around

Poa-Wen lifted up the weight of all the mountains
after first he took the weight of Fa-Cao's pen.

*because they had rushed to battle on a whim
and never knew the power to wait or take a stand*

*but threw themselves to death with a smile on
their lips while Urulari remained to practice*

vengeance for the dead.

A CITY UPON THE OCEAN'S SKIN

Xulevar was a city upon the ocean's skin. Perfect for
defence against men. Not so when the storm came in.

Thalyrun was positioned by the sky and lightning torched
it to the sands below and Quelthroq beneath the earth
and was flooded from the briefest melted snow.

Nehrajeum was a city of a thousand walls. Eventually,
when it was discovered it had no doors, it was too late
to save anyone at all.

Uthaldyis was centered in the jungle. It had ten times
fifty million people there. No one explained the need for
food to the lords who ruled but briefly, without care.

Gwalig-Gwalihanja was a city built of sand. None
bothered to correct the builder; he was the first to learn
the weight of his error out of hand.

And on it goes. I have yet to find a place untouched by
time or sorrow. And still the walls go up and up and up,
against tomorrow.

TAUGHT HERSELF

Siruthra taught herself the lyre but had no audience to curse her lack of talent.

Fasiuthus and Fasiuthalis; duellists plunge the blades in their opponent's chests and only wound themselves.

At Syacusthra, at the white alabaster cliffs of Syacusthra she threw herself off, and flew after him.

In the copper desert of Aztholyz forget the rain. It would only make the desert appear as a verdant field.

Syasuthra was taught the lyre by another and played well but the songs were never truly hers.

TO DIE

The Tnemu once held belief that to die in battle
would lead to greater glories in countries
of the dead. So none of them survived when
their enemies came for them.

The god Daalith was carved from people known
by their god's name. It was said their deity
would save, yet none of them survived.

As trees grow trees wither upon steppes where
Tnemu once dwelled, where the Daalith dwelled
only ashes of the burnt trees remain.

ILIESJA

Iliesja, the mother of wolves, the wolf-mother
spent her sun's fire on crafting her daughter
till even her daughter resented her mother.

Teyjandra at Xueleija, at the greying cliffs of
Xueleija spent her life waiting for the man
who would never come.

Marope gave her lust to the waiting moth and
the moth returned her affections to the burial
shrouds she devoured as her own.

Ianija in the obsidian jungle gave her jewels
to the winds themselves as the tigers devoured
her very bones.

Cephyraixaja the black, bloated idol all of
stone-decayed plotted no ruin of the world yet his
worshippers obliterated the world anyway.

I AM ONE ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEF

Talvia one acquainted with grief threw her
hands to any, and all, and nobody saved.

I am one acquainted with grief.

Tashec threw out upon the ocean of the sky
his victims and his followers equally.

*I throw out my hands to all and
all in their fashion answer me.*

Hejna cast herself down from the pillars of the
mountains to be destroyed even as her wings
caught up the wild north wind.

*The void destroyed he who made me
and I caught up his chains to make
my master dance.*

Leori crucified himself on the nine worlds suspended
and let himself become the wind to escape his days
of sorrow which never seemed to end.

*I don't die easy despite all the world's trials,
hold out my hands for all to embrace me,
if they but choose my embrace.*

A MIRROR OF MANY SIDES

The universe is a mirror of many sides.

The sand maker grinds dust to glass and glass to shimmering faces staring always at themselves.

Those of one nation despise the people of another but never can they find them; the nation is alone.

The people of one realm hate those of another but they are hidden too, those people of themselves.

Wherever one turns there are but familiar faces.

One slips into lives never knowing where they are.

People slip into the guise of one another never

recognizing enemies behind their own eyes.

The universe is a mirror of many sides.

AN EPILOGUE

Mren once asked the lady Chaia a riddle, which
neither those of heaven nor earth could solve. Mren bowed
low to her, offering the world if she could answer it.

With nighted veils about the black chalice of her body
she at once found the answer but denied it. For she knew
to answer it would be to enter damnation and the void.

She let him leave her palace of a thousand rooms, and
let the knowledge of her answer permeate her immortal days.
And then she lingered in the immortal lands of the gods.